

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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TRSE-00 AID-05 EA-07 IO-10 /080 W

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R 260800Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2189

INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL LAHORE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 8966

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PK

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY WINS SUPPORT FROM TWO NAP
MPA'S AND BECOMES MAJORITY PARTY IN NWFP ASSEMBLY

1. THE FOLLOWING WAS RECEIVED FROM THE CONSUL, PESHAWAR:

SUMMARY: WITH THE DEFECTION TO THE PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY (PPP) OF TWO NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY (NAP) MPA'S AND ANOTHER MPA FROM THE QAIYUM MUSLIM LEAGUE (QML), THE PPP HAS OBTAINED AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN THE NWFP ASSEMBLY. PPP LEADERS APPEAR CONFIDENT THEY CAN MAKE FURTHER INROADS INTO NAP ASSEMBLY STRENGTH AND BRING TWO OTHER MPA'S INTO THE RULING PARTY FOLD. WHILE THE PPP HAS BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL IN RECENT MONTHS IN OBTAINING SUPPORT FROM VARIOUS POLITICAL LEADERS, THIS SUPPORT HAS BEEN LARGELY OBTAINED BY PROMISES OF FINANCIAL BENEFITS, AND BY HARASSMENTS, THREATS AND OUTRIGHT VICTIMIZATION. THE PPP IS BECOMING A POWERFUL PARTY, BUT THERE IS LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT IT IS BECOMING A POPULAR PARTY. END SUMMARY.

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2. WITH THE DEFECTION LAST WEEK OF TWO NAP MPA'S TO THE

PAKISTAN PEOPLE'S PARTY, CHIEF MINISTER NASRULLAH KHATTAK AND HIS PPP COLLEAGUES IN FRONTIER SUCCEEDED IN CRACKING THE HITHERTO SOLID FRONT PRESENTED BY THE NAP IN THE NWFP ASSEMBLY.

3. ON SEPTEMBER 13, MOHAMMAD AKRAM KHAN, ONE OF THE TWO MPA'S FROM THE NAP STRONGHOLD OF CHARSADDA TEHSIL IN PESHAWAR DISTRICT, ANNOUNCED HIS ADHERENCE TO THE PPP. THREE DAYS LATER, WALI MOHAMMAD KHAN, MPA FROM NOWSHERA TEHSIL OF PESHAWAR DISTRICT, MADE A SIMILAR ANNOUNCEMENT AT A LARGE FUNCTION OF PPP FAITHFUL AT THE PESHAWAR CLUB.

4. THESE DEFECTIONS MARK THE SUCCESSFUL CULMINATION OF EFFORTS ON THE PART OF THE PPP LEADERSHIP IN THE FRONTIER DURING THE PAST 16 MONTHS TO BREAK THE HOLD OF NAP LEADER ABDUL WALI KHAN ON HIS FOLLOWERS. A VARIETY OF PRESSURE TACTICS COMBINED WITH FINANCIAL INDUCEMENTS WERE REPORTEDLY USED BY THE PPP TO OBTAIN THE ALLEGIANCE OF THE TWO MEN, INCLUDING, IT IS ALLEGED, LARGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY AS WELL AS THE MORE USUAL LICENSES AND PERMITS.

5. THE ONLY OTHDU MPA TO HAVE DESERTED THE NAP IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS IS BEGUM KALSUM SAIFULLAH KHAN, SISTER OF EX-GOVERNOR ASLAM KHATTAK, WHO WHILE GIVING HERE FULL SUPPORT TO THE RULING GOVERNMENT COALITION IN 1973 WHEN HER BROTHER BECAME GOVERNOR, DID NOT OFFICIALLY JOIN THE PPP UNTIL EARLY 1975.

6. IN WINNING THE SUPPORT OF MOHAMMAD AKRAM KHAN, THE PPP'S TASK WAS REPORTEDLY FACILITATED BY THE MPA'S CLOSE FAMILY RELATIONSHIP WITH CENTRAL COMMITTEE MINISTER MIR AFZAL KHAN AND BY HIS UNHAPPINESS WITH THE NAP LEADERSHIP FOR REFUSING TO NOMINATE HIS BROTHER IN THE RECENT SENATORIAL ELECTIONS.

7. WALI MOHAMMAD'S DEFECTION FROM THE NAP DID NOT COME AS MUCH OF A SURPRISE TO LOCAL POLITICAL OBSERVERS AS HE HAD APPARENTLY BEEN WAVERING IN HIS LOYALTY TO THE NAP IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECENT MONTHS. HIS FINAL DECISION TO BREAK WITH THE PARTY, HOWEVER, REPORTEDLY FOLLOWED THE IMPRISONMENT ON CORRUPTION CHARGES OF HIS BROTHER WHO HAD BEEN A HIGH-RANKING OFFICIAL IN THE PROVINCIAL FOOD DEPARTMENT.

THE BROTHER HAS NOW REPORTEDLY BEEN REINSTATED IN HIS FORMER POSITION.

8. THE SWITCH OF MOHAMMAD AKRAM AND WLI MOHAMMAD TO THE RULING PARTY HAS BEEN FOLLOWED BY ANOTHER DEFECTION FROM THE QML. ON SEPTEMBER 23, ABDUL MASTAN KHAN (HAZARA-MARDAN) BECAME THE FOURTH MPA FROM QAIYUM'S PARTY TO HAVE JOINED THE PPP IN THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS. HIS ACTION RAISED THE PPP'S ASSEMBLY STRENGTH TO 22 AND GAVE IT AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN THE HOUSE OF 42. THE QML NOW HAS THE SUPPORT OF FOUR MPA'S IN THE ASSEMBLY WHILE THE NAP'S STRENGTH IS 11.

9. PPP LEADERS IN PROVINCE APPEAR CONFIDENT THAT TWO MORE NAP MPA'S WILL ALSO JOIN THEIR PARTY IN THE NEAR FUTURE. ONE POSSIBLE NEW RECRUIT IS ZARIN KHAN, A KHOHISTANI FROM THE MERGED TRIBAL AREA IN NORTHERN HAZARA DISTRICT. THE OTHER IS ARBAB JEHANGIR KHAN, FROM TEHKAL VILLAGE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF PESHAWAR CITY. THE PPP LEADERSHIP IS PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO WIN OVER ARBAB JEHANGIR, DISTANT COUSIN OF IMRISONED NAP PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY LEADER ARBAB SIKANDER KHAN KHALIL, AS HE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE DEVELOPED SOME FOLLOWING AND INFLUENCE AMONG THE NUMEROUS KHALIL TRIBESMEN OF PESHAWAR TEHSIL. IT IS WIDELY BELIEVED THAT JEHANGIR WILL BE REWARDED WITH A PROVINCIAL CABINET POST, AS WELL AS OTHER BENEFITS, IF HE AGREES TO THROW IN HIS LOT WITH THE RULING PARTY.

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10. THE CONSULATE'S NAP CONTACTS ARE OBVIOUSLY NOT HAPPY ABOUT THESE DEFECTIONS FROM THEIR PARTY. SOME OF THEM, HOWEVER, TAKE THE VIEW THAT IT MAY BE IN THE LONG-

RANGE INTERESTS OF THE PARTY TO BE RID OF "OPPORTUNISTS." THEY SAY ALSO THAT WITH THE OPPOSITION BOYCOTT OF THE PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY LIKELY TO CONTINUE INDEFINITELY, THE ASSEMBLY STRENGTH OF A PARTY HAS CEASED TO HAVE ANY MEANING. WHILE THE NAP LEADERSHIP DOES NOT APPEAR CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE DEFECTION OF ZARIN KHAN, THE ONLY NAP MPA FROM HAZARA DISTRICT, THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY WORRIED ABOUT THE POSSIBLE LOSS OF ARBAB JEANGIR TO THE RULING PARTY. IT IS THE VIEW OF MEMBERS OF BOTH THE PPP AND THE NAP THAT NO ADDITIONAL NAP MPA'S ARE LIKELY TO DEFECT.

11. COMMENT. HAVING CONDUCTED SUCCESSFUL FORAYS AGAINST WITH THE QML AND THE NAP, THE PPP LEADERS IN THE FRONTIER - WITH, OF COURSE, IMPORTANT ASSISTANCE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER - HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT THEY HAVE BECOME VERY ADEPT IN THE USE OF POWER TO ACHIEVE POLITICAL GOALS. SINCE NASRULLAH BECAME CHIEF MINISTER
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LAST APRIL, THE PPP STRENGTH IN THE ASSEMBLY HAS ALMOST DOUBLED. IN ADDITION, THE PPP LEADERS HAVE UTILIZED THE APPARATUS AND RESOURCES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO WIN OVER NUMEROUS IMPORTANT LOCAL POLITICIANS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE PROVINCE.

12. FEW OF THESE POLITICIANS, HOWEVER, HAVE EMBRACED THE PPP WITH MUCH EAGERNESS OR ENTHUSIASM. SOME MAY HAVE WILLINGLY JOINED IN EXPECTATION OF CONSIDERABLE FINANCIAL REWARDS, BUT MOST APPEAR TO HAVE JOINED TO OBTAIN NECESSARY PROTECTION IN RESPONSE TO THREATS, HARASSMENT AND VICTIMIZATION. THUS, ALTHOUGH THE PARTY HAS SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING SUPPORT OF SOME LOCALLY IMPORTANT POLITICIANS, IT IS THE CONSULATE'S IMPRESSION THAT WHILE THE PPP MAY BE DEVELOPING INTO A POWERFUL PARTY, IT IS STILL NOT A POPULAR PARTY.
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